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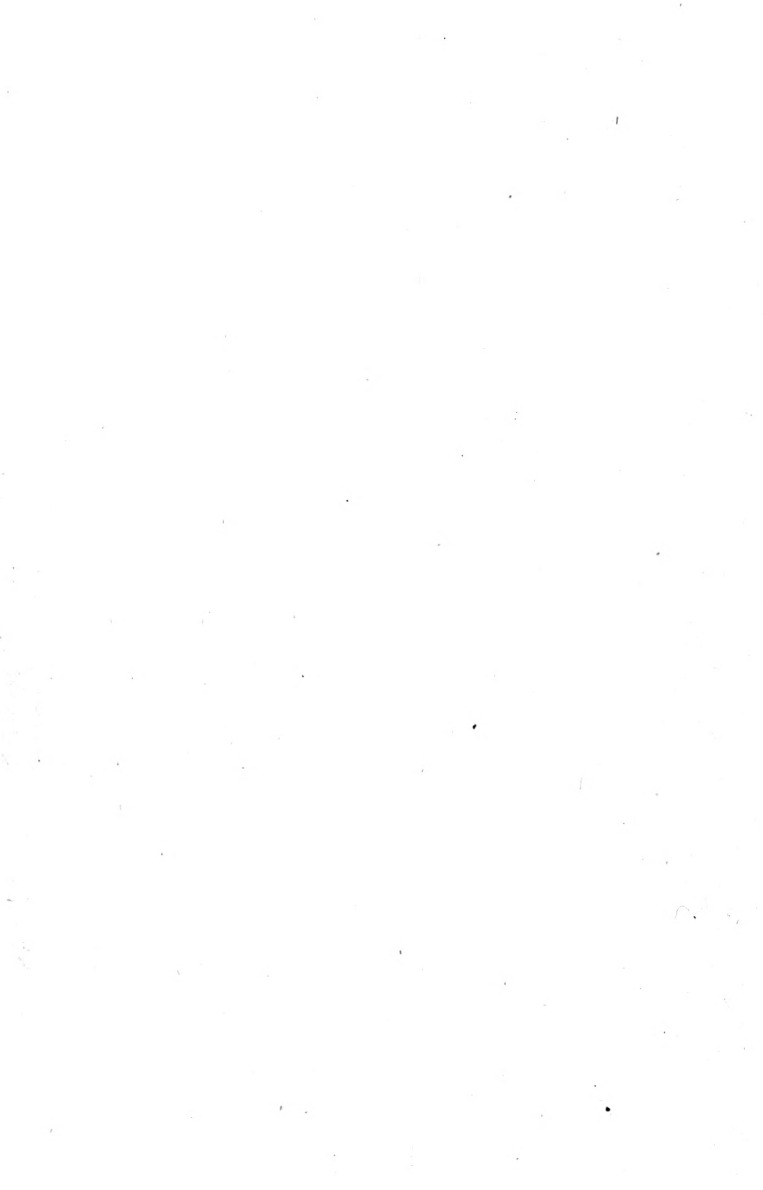


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Letter to the printer Fawcett's compliments.

27 July 1903.



P O E M S

P O E M S

BY

C. J. W. FARWELL

LONDON

ELKIN MATHEWS, VIGO STREET

1901

LOAN STACK

TO
LESLIE

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A FACE

LIFE took a blank and wrote a history there:
Joys, sorrows, loves and hopes had each their
share:

Each mood left lines therein its power to show,
Some deep, some small, some forming fast, some
slow.

Life worked for years and left a perfect whole,
A sad man's face in which there shone a soul.

A TURN OF THE WHEEL

A TURN of the wheel, and youth is here ;
All life is gaiety year by year ;
Young hearts beat gladly, life's sorrow scorning,
A turn of the wheel ; and so Good-morning.

A turn of the wheel, and the best is past ;
The shadows of life are deeper cast ;
Blood runs slower, and life's less gay ;
A turn of the wheel ; and so Good-day.

A turn of the wheel, and life is fled ;
Youth's hopes and longings are lying dead ;
The sun of life has lost his might ;
A turn of the wheel ; and so Good-night,

LONDON

LONDON, London,
Splendid, squalid ; gay, abhorrent,
Rushing like a headlong torrent,
Living heart and living wonder,
Clash of traffic loud as thunder ;
All your joy and all your sorrow
Mingled, clear for men to see,
From them each, you, London, borrow
Your strange charm and mystery.

London, London,
Choked with fog or gay with pleasure ;
Still in early morning's leisure,
Fierce and hot with night's endeavour
For the joy that lingers ever

Round your impassive streets and squares ;
Voice of pleasure and of pain,
Voice so full of hopes and fears,
Thick with loss and thick with gain.

London, London,
'Cross your streets a merry laughter
Rippling low ; a moment after
Sobs that break the heart and rend it
With life's grief and none to mend it ;
Each are blended in the throbbing
Of your heart from far and near,
Laughter mingled with the sobbing,
Joy and sorrow, smile and tear.

London, London,
Home of vice and home of virtue,
If my feeble singing were to
Whisper half your voice can tell,
Voice of Heaven and voice of Hell,

I should sing and men would listen,
While the eyes of most would glisten,
And the hearts of all would beat,
To the clash of hurrying feet.

TO MY LOVE

OH! like a rose in May is she,
And bright as sunlight on the sea,
That plays and sparkles smilingly,
Where wave and sunbeam meet.

And like a nightingale her voice,
That wakes the heart and bids rejoice,
And gives a man no other choice,
But worship at her feet.

And like the young Spring's tender grace
Glow the fair beauty of her face,
Where changing moods each other chase
As shadows over wheat.

And like a rose in May is she;
So fond, so fair, so gladly free;
And oh! my heart has gone from me,
And lies before her feet.

THE VOICE OF SPRING

THERE'S a whisper in the wood,
Where the leafless branches stood,
And the trees stretched bare to the sky;
For the buds are peeping forth,
Now the winter's fled to north,
At the fear of the Spring's glowing eye.

Then it's hey! for the bud and the leaf again!
It's hey! for the dancing sun!
For the Spring kills the Winter's grief again,
Now his dreary day is done.

There's a whisper in the hill,
Where the earth was frozen still,
And the grass was withered and dead;

For the timid green doth show,
As the wind steals to and fro,
And dries the tears that Nature shed.

Then it's hey! for the green and the grass
again!

It's hey! for the sparkling dew!
For the angels from Heaven now pass again:
And the world is changed and new.

There's a whisper on the breeze,
Which awakes the budding trees,
Where the birds had all hushed their note;
They are searching far and wide,
For a nook their nest to hide,
And love is tuning every throat.

Then it's hey! for the nest and the young
again!

It's hey! for the glittering morn!
For that glorious song shall be sung again,
Which was sung when they were born.

There's a whisper in the town,
Where the streets are dry and brown,
And the dust is circling above:
Leave your work and come away,
Whilst all Nature is at play,
Come and seek the maid whom you love.

Then it's hey! for young blood and for love
again!
It's hey! for a maiden pure!
For the Spring has come down from above
again!
To tell that God's love is sure.

DOUBT

SPIRIT, who wanderest through the hearts of men,
Leaving thy trace with fingers steeped in fire,
Branding the hearts of each with vain desire,
To probe the why, the wherefore and the when :
Spirit, whence comest thou?
Art thou of heaven or hell,
With restless zeal imprinted on thy brow,
Great with thy discontent of here and now,
Sick with thine ignorance? oh! Spirit, tell,
Whence dost thou come?

Spirit, what Master Will has given thee power
To stir our hearts, to wake a restless hope—
To strain our eyes to read the horoscope
Of things that lie outside the present hour?

Spirit, why dost thou tease
 The hearts of puny men with vague intent
 To put away their pleasant, thoughtless ease,
 The idle joy thou teachest to displease,
 And wander forth to regions where the scent
 Of musty ages, sick with long decay,
 Is mingled with a sense of future thought,
 Amidst whose stifling odour they are brought
 To know the worth of this their worthless day :
 Why dost thou lead ?

Spirit, who trainest eye of man to read
 Thoughts that are hard for his poor mortal brain ;
 Spirit, who guidest this weak hand in vain,
 To write the thoughts that thy swift fancies
 breed :

Spirit, why dost thou draw
 Our hearts away from what we used to know,
 And mock our vain attempts to make a law,
 A rule by which our lives shall have no flaw ;
 A law so hopeless as thy teachings show :

So pitiful, and with its hope so weak,
 That in despair our hearts rise up and speak,
 And cry aloud: "Why dost thou take away
 The rules, which once we could obey,
 And taking them, put nothing in their place,
 Spirit of evil grace?"

And yet, maybe, the spirit works for good,
 Teaching our hearts to rise to higher things,
 Training our thoughts to soar as if on wings,
 Our souls to feed upon no earthly food;
 That in futurity,
 We may have strength enough through failures
 sore,
 To cross that awful gulf, the rolling sea,
 Betwixt ourselves and that which we might be,
 And reach at length the shore,
 Towards which the best in man must ever
 strain:
 Perchance thou dost not vex in vain;
 Thou art, maybe, refining us to grow

More strong to bear the knowledge we must

know ;

Some day far off, to see the good and ill,

And know them both for what they are ;

And knowing both to thrust the ill afar ;

Then, when we take the good of our own will,

Spirit, thou wilt be still,

A LOVE SONG

I HEARD Nature sing a song of my love,
Whispering half aloud,
It echoed from earth and the sky above,
From the hill and the floating cloud :

The breeze, as it stole through the slumbering
trees,
Murmured the sweet refrain,
And the leaves rustled back in their sun-born ease,
The chorus of love again :

Then a sunflower caught it and whispered the
word
To a rose-bud bending near,
Who sang it aloud to a passing bird,
As he paused in his flight to hear :

The bird flew off to a neighbouring tree,
And sang to his mate in her nest,
While the rose-bud bent to a golden bee
Who hung on her ruddy breast :

Though each thing sang of his own own love,
And the joy of the life he knew,
The melody sang, from beneath and above,
To my heart, my sweet, of you.

“LABUNTUR ANNI”

OLD yesterday, in passing, leaves his trace
 Of what he felt ; and then he moves along,
 And sees to-morrow standing in his place
 A moment, ere he, too, must join the throng
 Of glad to-morrows turned to yesterdays ;
 Each lost within the grasp of “ what has been,”
 Each cherishing their memories always,
 Each holding fast some long-forgotten scene.

And youth in watching takes life as a jest,
 Unheeding that Old Time is fleeting fast ;
 Each morrow in his eyes appears the best,
 With better gifts to offer than the last :
 But whilst he laughs, old age creeps on apace ;
 And lo ! a change, a loss, a vacancy,
 And all his morrows fade to yesterdays,
 And what has been's more glad than what
 will be.

And last, there is no morrow : for to-day,
Contemptuous, stern, forbidding, chokes his
breath,
And, all unheeding, Time upon his way
Has sent another to the lap of death ;
And new to-morrows bloom for other eyes,
As fresh as those before, and sweet with pride,
And yesterdays still keep their memories,
And know the men who loved them ere they
died.

And through the abyss of years, the mighty line
Some day will marshal, ere time pass away ;
And each will show the memory he keeps fine,
The memory that marks him as a day ;
And men will crouch before them as they stand,
And tremble at those phantom memories,
For each day holds his message in his hand,
And works revenge before he fades and dies.

SOME DAY WHEN WE ARE OLD

Some day when we are old,
 When youth and its gay pleasures fade away,
 When in our veins the sluggish blood runs cold,
 Some day, when we are gray ;
 How shall we think the thoughts we cherish
 now,
 How shall we dream the dreams our youth has
 known,
 When age implants his wrinkles on our brow,
 Does he, too, kill the thoughts we call our own,
 When we are old?

Some day when what seems far away and drear
 Is stealing up and looming like a shade,
 When doubts and fears grow stronger year by
 year,
 Some day, my love, shall we two be afraid ;

When death, whom now we shun and turn
 away,

Shall thrust his face between us and command

The one to hurry and the one to stay,

Dragging apart with firm, remorseless hand;

Some day, will Death be grim, and cold, and
 dread,

As now he seems while we are young and glad,

Or shall we welcome his gray, ancient head,

And kiss the face which looks so worn and sad,

When we are old?

Some day, when we are old,

Dear, can it be we shall have grace to know

A perfect age which is not dull or cold;

Dear, can we go the way Death bids us go,

And find a place where Love, divinely fair,

Will have the power to comfort and to say,

Through Death's grim valley and its icy air,

Love comes unscathed and lives with us always,

When we are old?

"CARPE DIEM"

THE world is bright, so bright, my love,
The birds are madly singing ;
Forget the gloom of night, my love,
The gloom it may be bringing.
Whatever fate before you stand,
Reck not of future sadness,
But take the moment in your hand
And laugh it into madness.

The sky is blue, so blue, my love,
The roses gaily blowing ;
Forget the fears you knew, my love :
The fears you may be knowing.

The present tarries but awhile,
Then fades with joys and sorrows,
So come, give Summer smile for smile,
Dream not of sad tomorrows.

While all is fair, so fair, my love,
Laugh, jest, let all be merry;
Enough of dull despair, my love,
When Summer's queen we bury.
Now Summer's gay and we are young,
Alas! we fast grow older,
Come sport, where Summer's warmth is
flung:
Lest Winter find us colder.

THE WIND OF AUTUMN

THE wind of death is screaming o'er his prey,
With grief and pain expectant at his feet;
The woods in their bright finery dare not
meet
Death's messenger, rough-tempered, wanton,
gay.
But see! the frost has touched with fingers gray,
Each shuddering tree to mark his roadway
plain,
Where he, exulting on his boisterous way,
With every breath will leave the scar of pain.
What power, as in the fable of old days,
Has cursed his feet that whereso'er they tread,
There lies a heap of leaves, all brown and
dead,
Where lately shone the Autumn's golden blaze?

He careth nothing, trampling all the maze
Of woodland paths and alleys far and near,
Searching each cranny with keen, greedy gaze,
Lest he should leave one tree that is not sere.

The Earth's lament could never turn his mind,
The Great Destroyer of kind Nature's art;
So Earth herself is still, for her sad heart
Knows the full omen of that mocking wind.
Oh! Cease thy course! Thou are not so
unkind,
But thou canst leave one tender spray of red,
That through the dreary months, we there may
find
One remnant of the glory Autumn shed.

He will not hearken; see! that leaf has gone,
And flutters in a lost despair to earth,
Finding her bier where she had found her
birth,
When first in youthful greenery she shone;

Then changing as the Summer's day was done,
To don the Autumn's glory for her death,
Vanished that beauty lent her by the sun,
Vanished her grace before his angry breath.

See, where the wind has left that woodland
chill,
Where, ere his coming, in the sunlight
gleamed
Soft reds and purples mingling, till they
seemed

To fade within the haze of yon blue hill.
Autumn is dead, and Winter works his will,
Watching the outcome of his prophet's toil,
His messenger, delighting to fulfil
His Master's wish—to rob, to strip, despoil.

But on a sudden, lo! the wind has fled,
And left his trace on every flower and leaf;
The earth, in perfect agony of grief,
Can make no sign; she has no tears to shed;

Only she sobs a little o'er her dead,
Dreading the advent of the Winter King,
And dreaming of that day when, from her bed,
She rose triumphant, kissed to life by Spring.

A WOMAN'S WORD

Yes; all that I have to give, you have,
 Though that is little enough to give,
That I wonder now that you still should crave
(As you say you do) to be my slave,
 Through the years we have yet to live.

But how will it be in a few years' time,
 Will you love me then as you love me now,
When I have outlived my beauty's prime,
And love is no longer the god sublime
 To whom now we have made our vow?

Will you love me then, or will you forget
 The promise of love you swore?

I shall be old while you are yet
In the pride of your manhood's vigour set,
Will your love be mine as it was before?

Or will you tire of my faded face,
And my failing strength, and my hair turned
gray,
And seek out another of fresher grace,
Who will take in your heart the self-same place
That I hold in your heart to-day?

Dear, we are weak, we women folk,
But oh! when we love, it is once for all;
When I saw you first, when first you spoke,
My heart leaped up, as it were, awoke,
And no matter what now befall,

My heart has escaped from me to you,
You bound me then by a magic spell;
But, dear, if you love me, tell me true,
Tell me now what you mean to do,
If I come to you, ill or well.

Do I hurt you, dear, by what I say?

 Forgive me, love, if I give you pain,
But I fear the unknown distant day,
When I am no longer bright and gay ;
 Will my love be all in vain ?

Dear, I will talk no more of this ;

 That you love me now is enough for me,
Enough for the present to taste that bliss,
To live in your love, to dream of your kiss,
 And the rest,—I must wait and see.

It is good to love though I lose you at last,

 To see the love in your dear eyes shine,
And no one will ever have power to cast
From my heart the memories of the past ;
 They, at least, will be always mine.

TO SEA

STEADILY blows the wind off shore,
Steadily blows the wind, oh !
And the gallant ship puts out once more,
To seek what she can find, oh !

Cheerily sounds the Captain's voice,
Cheerily spurts the steam, oh !
And my bounding heart scarce dare rejoice
Lest it find it all a dream, oh !

Merrily laughs the sparkling sea,
Merrily dashes the foam, oh !
There's never a heart but would fain be free
The rollicking waves to roam, oh !

Drearily, drearily let it blow,
Till the sullen sea be gray, oh!
Nor sea nor wind shall daunt us so,
When our good ship rides on her way, oh!

Steadily blows the wind off shore,
Steadily blows the wind, oh!
And we're off once more, we're off once more,
To seek what we can find, oh!

“SO EVERY SWEET WITH SOWRE
IS TEMPERED STILL ”

THE same stem bears the blushing flower,
That bears the angry thorn.
The clouds of storm will bank and lower,
Where shone the light of morn.
And pain may enter in that hour,
In which our joy was born.

The sun that throws the brightest ray
Throws too the darkest shade,
The blossom born in warmth of May
In that same warmth will fade.
And grief may travel in the way,
Which love's soft footsteps made.

FLOWER FANCIES

The Cowslip

THE yellow cowslip growing
Too proud to be content
To have one blossom blowing
Upon his stalk, has rent
His face to tiny faces,
His fragrant scent to spread,
Each perfect in its graces
To form one perfect head.

The Daffodil

The daffodil, most stately flower of all
That from the lap of maiden Springtime fall,
When her fair dream of golden beauty dies,
Bequeaths her colour to the evening skies.

The Violet

The violet, the violet,
Is nestling in the ground,
And see ! his tender face is set
With sheltering leaves around ;
His grace to Nature pays his debt
Wherever he be found.

If frightened on his budding night,
A change will then appear,
For he is born a timid white
As signal of his fear ;
But blue or white, he must delight
With scent and beauty rare.

REALIZATION

I COURTED Sorrow and she spurned my courting,
I cried to Sorrow and she would not hear me,
While, all day long, young Joy was idly sporting
Near me.

I turned to Joy and pressed my arms around her,
“Come, stay with me,” I said, “we’ll jest
to-morrow,”
But, when the daylight came, I looked and
found her
Sorrow.

A SONNET

How shall I meet death when he comes to me,
 With tears and sighs, or joyfulness and mirth,
 Knowing that I have tried the utmost worth
Of life and found its vast futility ;
Or shall I fear to go beyond and see
 What lies beyond our death, before our birth,
 And so return to the soft lap of earth,
Unknowing, fearful of what yet may be ?

I cannot tell, and yet I think that death
Should not appal ; to gently fall asleep
Should cause no frightened quickening of the breath,
 But rather joy to loose the ties which keep
Our souls fast bound to all this earth beneath ;
Death hushes those that laugh and those that weep.

"COME, SWEET, AND TELL ME"

COME, Sweet, and tell me all your dreams,
Sweet, tell me where your fancies stray
The long night through, till Sunlight gleams
Awake the day.

What thoughts of yours may crown the night,
And kiss the darkness as they go ;
What dreams in fancy's wandering flight,
Sweet, do you know ?

And tell me when pure dreams are brought,
To pace your brain with silent feet ;
Among them all is there a thought
Of Someone, Sweet ?

Of one whose senses beat and thrill,
At touch of little tender hands,
Whose only wish is to fulfil,
Sweet, your commands ?

But see the hurrying minutes fleet,
The sun is melting in the sea,
And we must part ; but keep, my Sweet,
One thought of me.

HARK TO THE ROAR AND THE
SURGE OF THE SEA.

HARK to the roar and the surge of the sea,
When the morning of life breaks joyous and free,
And all we have hoped or planned to be

Pulses and throbs in our brain.

Ah! do ye hear the sad sea's sigh,
When the sun sinks down in an angry sky,
And all we have planned is doomed to die,
And all we have done is vain?

Then the wound of defeat must rankle sore,
As we dream of the joy that has gone before,
Born of the mastering rush and roar

Of the sea's omnipotent strife.

As we watch the sun's last sinking ray,
With hearts that are sick we turn away,
For death, only death our tired lips pray,
If death means an end to life.

And we think of the waves which shouted that
morn,
That the rock from its base should be rent and
torn,
Yet the rock still smiles in its silent scorn,
And the waves, it is, that are dead.
So evil lives though we swore its death,
Like are we to the waves beneath,
Weary and worn and spent of breath,
With our grand ideals fled.

Ages on ages that rock has stood,
Smiled at the sea in her every mood,
Scorned the sea and her foaming brood,
Laughed at her challenging call :
Yet in the future I seem to see
Open expanse where the rock should be,
And I hear the wail of eternity,
As the waves still rise and fall.

ROSE-LEAVES

THE roses all are dead :
 Weep for the rose !
Their beauty now has fled,
 As the wind blows.

Pick up the withered leaf,
 Once shining fair ;
Beauty has turned to grief,
 Bliss to despair.

Search in the mould and find
 Where they all lie ;
Oh ! breeze, thou art unkind,
 Letting them die.

Red, yellow, spendid white,
Once proud to see,
Now they have bowed to night,
Death's victory.

Brown, dusty, withered, sere,
Death's disarray,
Marking a love once dear,
Now dead as they.

LIFE'S SOLITUDE

INTO the mighty solitude of life,
Each soul alone must go ;
Alone must battle in its ceaseless strife,
Among its wastes must wander to and fro :
At times a hand may stretch and touch his own,
And he may learn to love a friendly face,
And travelling on, he dreams he's not alone,
That hand-in-hand they travel at one pace,
And soul with soul is knit in friendship's tie ;
But still there is a land
Where none can enter, where no other eye
Can see and understand.
Each soul must go alone,
And wander through the mansions of his thought ;

Seeking the hopes and longings of his own,
And finding help in nought.
Alone the battle is to lose or win,
Alone the duty is forgot or done ;
And when at last Death grimly enters in,
And bids him watch his life's fast setting Sun,
When on Death's shoulders all his cares are
 thrown,
Into the future land the soul must fare alone.

A BLACKBIRD SINGING IN EDIN-
BURGH IN FEBRUARY

HARK there the voice of some melodious singer ;
Some bird who pipes as if Spring were begun,
Forgetful that the storms of Winter linger,
And still have power to fright this fickle sun.

He whistles there within the dreary garden
Of this old town whose every wall is gray ;
So well he sings, no mortal man could harden
His heart to hurry heedless on his way.

Come, catch from that shrill whistle some
 confusion
Of Summer's joy in every leaf and flower ;
What matter though you know it is delusion ?
Pluck, while ye may, this happy, shortlived hour.

What matter though the bird is now mistaking
The birth of Spring, in Winter's chilling reign?
That glorious note with which his throat is
 shaking,
Can cheer men's hearts ; the bird sings not in vain.

Let him sing on and dream of future pleasure,
Of mate and nest, snug in the leafy trees ;
Come catch from him a trifle of his measure,
Come laugh with him in this his hour of ease.

The wind may blow and chill his throat to-
 morrow,
Still let him sing to-day in careless glee ;
To-day is glad, and if I must know sorrow,
Enough to bear it when it come to me.

Sing on, sing on, thou blackbird, gay and joyous,
Thou'rt turning Winter to a dream of Spring ;
Some of the grief and troubles that annoy us
We learn to lose while we can hear thee sing.

A MESSAGE

HARK! there, the wind from that far-distant
mountain,

Bearing its message out, out to the sea,
Telling the secret of river and fountain,
Scented with joys from each flower and each
tree;

Outward and onward its message is carried,
Gathering fragrance from hill-side and sky,
See! there, it hurried, and there now it tarried,
Whispering, whispering, as it fled by.

Now it draws nearer, and we, too, shall capture
Some of the hope-laden echoes of Spring;
Never so tender, so perfect a rapture,
Breeze, as thy whispering melodies bring:
Here now it lingers and murmurs its tiding,
Catch the soft echo of Spring at her best,

Hark ! there the song of some throstle presiding
Over his mate, lying snug in her nest.

Listen ! I catch the soft mirth of some river
Pattering down over rock, over stone,
All things in harmony nothing can sever,
Whispering, whispering hopes of their own,
Each thing has lent to the breeze in its passage
Some of the joy and the love that it knows ;
Faithful the breeze, for it whispers its message
Telling its tidings, as softly it blows.

Breeze, wilt thou carry one word in thy bosom,
One little message, one whisper from me ?
Find out a maiden, as fair as a blossom,
Find out a maid who lives over the sea ;
And when thou findest her, bend down and kiss
her,
Soft wrap her round from her head to her feet ;
There is none fairer : oh ! breeze, do not miss her,
Breeze, tell her softly, "I love you, my sweet."

A NEW YEAR WISH

THE New Year holds within his hand
His gifts for us to take or leave,
And, as he passes, may demand
New thoughts to cheer us or to grieve:
The best wish I can find, I send,
That when the year has passed away,
On looking back from end to end,
You find you've gained from time's decay.

A BALLAD

Do you hear the sea a-calling
Sister mine, sister mine ;
While the waves are rising, falling,
Sister mine, sister mine ?
While each wave comes on unheeding
And crisps his foaming head,
Do you hear my lover pleading
To seek me from the dead ?

Do you hear the sad wind sobbing,
Sister mine, sister mine ;
While the tide is pulsing, throbbing,
Sister mine, sister mine ?
Where the tranquil salt-pools glitter,
Where the steely moonbeams shine,
Where the wind tastes harsh and bitter,
Heavy-laden with the brine ?

Do you see a ghost there standing,

Sister mine, sister mine?

'Tis my lover there demanding,

Sister mine, sister mine,

'Tis my lover come to claim me,

From his grave within the deep,

'Tis my lover come to shame me

That I have no tears to weep.

Do you hear his voice entreating,

Sister mine, sister mine ;

Do you hear his dead heart beating,

Sister mine, sister mine ?

His face is white and hollow,

His hand points out the way,

Do you hear him bid me follow ?

Dear God, could I obey !

These walls are close and binding,

Sister mine, sister mine ;

This gaslight is too blinding,

Sister mine, sister mine :

I cannot see my lover,
Where he's lying waiting me,
While over him and over
Rolls the cruel, treacherous sea.

Some day I shall be going,
Sister mine, sister mine,
By the way Death will be showing,
Sister mine, sister mine ;
He will know me when I find him,
He will greet me as of old,
For though the seas may bind him,
His heart is never cold.

SPRING

THE Earth, her travail done,
In fulness of her time has given birth,
And from her fruitful womb has borne a son, —
Her son, the Spring, a child of perfect worth,
Begotten of great Phœbus, by whose rays
Old Time is lengthening all his days,
And stealing from the night the hours
In which to deck the flowers,
And teach each tender bud,
By gentle wooing of the rain
And pleasant breezes, blowing once again,
To burst its bonds; to give the trees young
 blood
To clothe themselves in robes of green,
That nowhere in the land may there be seen

One tree that is not bright and gay,
When Summer's queen shall pass that way.
So Earth and Sun,
Rejoicing in the welcome birth of Spring,
In his dear reign begun,
Outvie each other, who may bring
The choicest gifts their hands can hold,
The natal gifts for this, their youngest born ;
The Sun, to drive out niggard cold,
Has sent his dancing beams, and every morn
They play and sparkle round the cradle bed,
Whilst loving hands have decked the paths with
 flowers,
That Earth's dear son be led
Through gladsome sights and odorous bowers,
Till at the last, when he must pass from sight,
He may bear glorious memories to the night,
And in the gifts they scatter round his feet,
Forget the woes that even Spring must meet.
The birds, in honour of the welcoming,
Pipe out their notes and sing

A song with one accord
Of perfect love and glory in their lord ;
The little rivers dash and fret their foam
To join the chorus with their rippling voice,
And welcome to his home
The youngest born, who bids all things rejoice ;
The prophet of the sweets which Summer knows,
Yet having gifts as rich as those
Which she from all her wealth can bring,—
The perfect Son, the laughing, tender Spring.

SUMMER

SUMMER, the stately queen, comes following
Spring,

The fickle boy of many a tear and smile,
The reckless prodigal, who dares to fling
His mirth abroad awhile, and then awhile
Turns him to sighs;

Spring flits, and then sweet Summer
Hotfoot behind appears a welcome comer,

With steadfast eyes

And cloudless skies,

And surer health to leaf and flower,

Scattering from her plenteous dower

Her gracious gifts;

Her work is to complete

All that the skill of Spring began,

Maturing with her radiant heat

Each leaf to deeper green ; her presence lifts
All Nature's heart as only Summer can ;
The oak and ash no longer fear to spread
Their tender robes across their stately limbs ;
The flowers lay bare their hearts
And revel in the warmth her glance imparts ;
Each plot and walk and lane and bed
In the gay shimmer of her radiance swims.

The flowers she brings reflect her gracious face,
Buds splendid and seductive in their scent,
Luxurious roses, lolling in their grace,
Deigning to feed the bees who so frequent
Their majesties, that they must bend their head
And stoop beneath the waxen weight,
But that the pride of race, in which they're bred,
Cannot forget the glory of their state ;
The sunflower, gorgeous in the noonday glow,
Looks down and nods all drowsy in the heat,
Watching in soft disdain the buds below,
Who are content with a more lowly seat ;

Summer, who brings the swallows in her train,
The swifts, in darting eddies on their prey,
Hunting the busy gnats, to turn again
To those dark eaves where, through the live-
long day,

The gaping mouths of callow youngsters peer
And stretch and scream when their swift flight
draws near.

The birds all love her and can sing their best,
The cuckoo's voice in twofold echo rings,
And round the flowers, the butterflies, gay drest
In dainty grace, float by on lazy wings ;
Queen of fair days and queen of fairer nights,
When scent of hay lies heavy on the breeze,
When man with every throb of heart delights
To know her beauty, her delicious ease,
Summer, whose hands retain the magic skill
To clothe the garden, woodland, field and hill.

Yet Summer, in thy glory dost thou dream
Of that dread day when Autumn's step draws near,

When chilling winds in constant anguish seem
To shout the message that thou wouldst not
hear?

Art thou so careless, that thou dreamst away
Thy whole life long, until thou wak'st one day
To find thy reign is over,
To see the corn lie low and bee-loved clover,
All things on all sides telling thy reign done?
It may be so, and yet, methinks, I feel
Sometimes, when slowly sinks the happy sun,
When 'cross the senses thoughts of evening steal,
And stars gleam out to watch their maiden Queen,
When thy soft reign is at its grandest height,
And each night dreams of what the day has been,
And each day lives his best to bless the night,
In night's calm glory do I seem to hear
A whispered message warning everywhere
That thou art waiting, knowing all thine end,
Disdaining to betray thy growing fear,
Content to wait until Time's circles send
Thee on thy way, and leave us shivering here.

Spring's fairest sister, ever gentle Summer,
Perfect in beauty, long-expected comer,
Thou leav'st behind thee hearts that mourn in
 vain,
Stored with the memories of thy Sun-girt reign.

YESTERDAY

I GAZE upon a ghost with sad, dim eyes,
With hand outstretched to touch and grasp mine
own ;

The face of one in bitterest sorrow wise,
Whose fate is life, but life uncheered, alone ;
Who knows remorse, and tinged with deep regret,
Old memories which rise and cry aloud ;
Whose day is done, whose sun for ever set,
Who yet may never know Death's friendly
shroud,

Who gazes ever on life's backward way,
The sad-eyed ghost of dead, lost yesterday,

TO-MORROW

THOU brightest, fairest one,
Brother to thy sad sister Yesterday,
Whose work has all been done,
And with the setting sun,
Has passed away.

To-morrow, with thy light,
Thou bringest in thy hand a plenteous store
Of gracious hope's delight,
When this dividing night
Shall close her door.

In thy bright dawn we see
The shadows of to-day grow pale and faint;
We see our victory,
When all our life shall be
Without a taint.

And though thine advent bring
The fading of some light in grim despair,
Yet ever on hope's wing
Our hearts will rise and sing,
"The morrow's fair."

To thee we strain our eyes,
And strive to read the future's mystery,
As sunlight swiftly flies
And it's ripe glory dies,
We long for thee.

So "welcome" will I cry,
E'en though life's sorrows overwhelm me here;
And when I come to die,
Let my voice rise on high,
"To-morrow's near."

THE SONG OF THE SEA

CARELESS, careless croons the sea
In a lazy melody ;
Softly rising, softly falling,
None would ever know
Dead men's voices calling, calling,
From the depths below.

Tender, tender is the wind,
Calling in a voice that's kind
To the laughing, gurgling waves,
As they leap at play
Hiding all those dreary graves
From the light of day.

Dreary, dreary is the wailing,
When the gentle wind is failing,

And you catch the sobbing cry
Of the voices of the dead,
Stealing upward to the sky
From their sea-weed bed.

Treacherous, treacherous is the sea,
Even in that melody,
And the waves that sighing, sighing,
As they break and go,
Echo voices of the dying
From the depths below.

DESPAIR

I HEARD a sobbing voice at night,
That thrilled with pain the listening air ;
Then, said I, " This must be the height
" Of all despair."

I heard the sigh of one who hides
His bitterest sorrow in his heart :
Then said I, " There's no grief, besides,
Can have a part."

I heard loud laughter, harsh yet gay,
Choking the sense of shame or fear ;
And then I knew, but dared not say—
" This is despair."

QUEEN OF THE FLOWERS

FLOWERS, do you know who is coming here,
Flowers, do you realize
That some one is coming with eyes as clear
As the blue in the summer skies?
Some one is coming who can outshine
Even your radiant grace,
Even the tints of your buds divine
By the charm of her maiden face.

Rose, you will pale when you see her lips,
Lily, you'll blush to know
There is a purity can eclipse
Aught that your face can show ;
Jessamine, your little hands will grope
To clutch at her twining hair ;
You breathe out the scent of your secret hope
To the joy of the summer air.

I said, there was none in this world of ours
So fair, little flowers, as you ;
And yet, do you know what I found, dear flowers ?
I found that I spake not true.
I have found the face of one tender maid,
Where the lily and rose combine,
And, lily and rose, you both will fade
When you gaze on this maid of mine.

Now when she passes along the grass,
Lift up your head, my rose,
Smile at her bravely until she pass,
Then bend your head and close,
Close in your bosom the memory,
In the home of your sheltering leaf,
For though you may fade, there still will be
A thought that can bring relief.

Come, little lily, you are as white
And pure as unfallen snow ;

See! I will give you the best delight
That mortal or flower can know ;
You shall be plucked, and in your death
Find life that can never die ;
You shall rise and fall with my lady's breath,
On her dainty bosom lie.

Flowers, you are tender and innocent,
You children of hopefulness,
Lading the air with your mingled scent,
Born but to love and bless ;
Still, little flowers, though fair you are,
And pure as the skies above,
You will see a grace more fair by far,
Flowers, when you see my love.

"TROPFEN AUS DER EWIGKEIT"

A LITTLE hour of sunshine and of rain,
A little day of April smiles and showers,
A little pleasure and a little pain,
Each mingled in this motley life of ours.

A little day and then the Great Unknown,
A little gleam of shadows and gray light,
A little graveyard and a little stone,
And then at length the dawning of day-light.

AUTUMN

SEASON of dying loveliness,
Gorgeous in bright decay,
Autumn, your fairy fingers bless
The joys you steal away.

Season of hopeless glory,
When tree and hedge and leaf
In beauty transitory
Would fain conceal their grief.

Season of lovely sunshine,
Season of bitter frost,
There is no glory so divine
At such a mighty cost.

Those same hands that paint the tree
A gleam of gold and red,
Have killed the glory silently,
And, passing, leave it dead.

Autumn, your beauty lingers
In freshness everywhere,
Though the work of your quick fingers
Has fashioned Summer's bier.

The joy you bring, we grudge you
Though glorious 'tis to see,
For we can only judge you
By what the end must be.

A WHISPER

A WHISPER came from the mighty hills:—
“Man’s little day is brief;
And fate will carry him whither it wills,
As autumn winds a leaf.
And man may struggle and strive, but lo,
One little breath of wind,
And the place where he has been, none will know,
And the place where he is, none find.”

A whisper came from the dainty flowers:—
“Man’s little day is bright;
Pluck the best of the happy hours,
And dream no more of night.

For the frost may come in beauty's prime,
Or tarry till joy be dead :
Come, laugh, while ye may, in the summer-time,
And smile while the sun's o'erhead."

A whisper came from the stars above :—
"Man's little day must go :
But God's own gift, his gift of love,
Will pass neither fast nor slow :
Though narrow the path man's feet have trod,
He'll carry his love from earth,
And the use that he made of his gift from God
Is the measure of each man's worth."

NIGHT

THE great Sun, sinking in the crimson west,
Hushes the tired world to gentle sleep,
Forgetting now the radiant joys of day,
Only desiring rest.

The purple essence of the dying Sun
Illumines all the sky, then slowly fades ;
The little breeze is hushed, and strangely still
The world awaits the coming boon of sleep.
All day, the ocean beat its waves in vain
Against the moveless rocks :
All day, the sea-birds swept their restless flight,
The sea, the birds are very peaceful now.
The moon peeps out and with her maids, the stars,
Keeps her unerring watch upon the night.
The world itself is sunk in silent sleep.

Man's short day done, he lays his armour down
And waits the coming night and rest at last,
Forgetting now the lust and joy of life :
And gentle death, who brings the boon of sleep,
Stands near and watches with her tender eyes ;
And all the world for that one man is still—
Then gentle Death bends down and with her
 breath
Scented with odours from that distant isle,
All men have dreamed of, breathes upon his lips,
And gives her boon, the greatest boon of all,
Peace.

"COME BACK, MY LOVE".

Come back, my love, and whisper the old song,
Come back, come back.

Forgive, forget the bitter stain of wrong
That followed on love's track ;

In this still night, let past and present meet,
And bless my dreams with your returning feet.

Come back, my love, come back and whisper low,
Love, hasten here ;

Come back again, dear heart, and let me know
My life is still your care ;

Whisper one word, and let the darkness seem,
More brilliant than the daylight in my dream.

Come back, my love, the day is very cold,
 And grim and sad;
Only when night her sheltering wings unfold,
 Can my tired heart be glad;
For in that mimic death I still may learn
A joy that rougher sunbeams scorn and spurn.

Come back and whisper with your fragrant
 breath,
 Come back and teach
The life you'd have me live till tender death
 Stoop down to me and reach,
And draw me hence to some place where, may be,
I shall have grace to love eternally.

AN INVOCATION TO SPRING

WELCOME, young Springtime,
Come to us laughingly,
Speed on thy way to us
Weary of Winter:
Come and awake again
Blossom and fruit-trees;
Cast o'er the dry earth
Thy sheltering mantle;
Tarry not longer
Young Spring, whom we love so;
Thou who canst bear
In thy young, fragrant bosom
Hope and the wakening
Joy of new life.

Come to us laughingly,
Child of the Sunshine,
Bring in thy kingdom,
And shame niggard Winter;
Wake the young life
That is sleeping around us,
Blow thy clear horn
On the hills and the valleys;
Whisper thy thoughts
To the birds in the tree-tops,
Whisper of love and of Summer again.

Come, thou young prophet,
And prophesy sweet things;
Sing us thy songs
Of life and of May time;
For we are weary
Of frost and his harshness;
Sick for the flowers
And the wakening beauty;
Touch the old trees,

That they blossom in finery,
Soft tender greenness,
The promise of life,
Break the hard earth
And rouse the white snowdrop
Up from the cold earth,
So long his chamber ;
Wake the white snowdrop,
For he, it is beckons,
Calls on the others,
His timider playmates,
Primrose and violet,
Waiting for some one
Bold to appear
And taste of the new day,
Ere they will venture
Out to the world.

Come, tender Spring,
For we worship and love thee ;
We will forgive thee

Thy light, fickle ways:
We will remember
When thou art angry,
That thou hast come to us
Rich in thy fragrance:
And though thou feignest
Flight on the sudden,
We will remember
All that thou bringest,
We will remember
And laugh with thee, Spring.

Fly away, Winter,
For young Spring is coming;
Art thou not shaméd
Of all thy destruction?
Spring comes to build again
Where thou destroyest;
Spring comes to sing again,
Sweet songs of love.

GOOD-BYE

GOOD-BYE: good-bye:

So let us kiss and go,

For see! around us winter's spell is nigh,

Grim frost and snow.

The trees are shivering at his clutch

On every side;

Love came and tarried, but at one hard touch,

Lo! he died.

Good-bye: good-bye:

Summer is dead, and we

Must now go forth and travel far and wide,

Alone with memory.

Good-bye: good-bye:

We loved, but now 'tis over,

And sad beneath a wintry sky

We part in sorrow :

Unless, unless, when fields are sweet with clover,

We meet again, just you and I,

On some fresh, glad, tomorrow.

"AVE ATQUE VALE."

THE quiet of dawn
Creeps down and settles on the throbbing night ;
All fateful lies the hush,
Before the sunrise wakes the birds to life,
The hush, that waits upon the rising sun.
Within the house, a silence hangs and broods,
Nought breaking it, except a feeble breath
Which falling rises, rising falls again,
Until it sinks to very nothingness ;
A hand steals out and draws the blind close down,
While over all the earth the sun leaps up,
Flooding the world with his vitality ;
Only within the house night reigns supreme.

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